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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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10/800,684

03/16/2004

Hikaru Takakura

TAKAKURA1B

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EXAMINER

RAO, MANJUNATH N

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

1652

SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD OF RESPONSE	MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE
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3 MONTHS

01/19/2007

PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire 6 MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/800,684

Applicant(s)

TAKAKURA ET AL.

Examiner

Manjunath N. Rao, Ph.D.

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 26 October 2006.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-6 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 3-6 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1 and 2 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☒ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 16 March 2004 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. 08/894,818.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>3-16-04</u> . | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

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DETAILED ACTION

Claims 1-6 are currently pending and are present for examination. Claims 1-2 are now under consideration. Claims 3-6 remain withdrawn from consideration as being drawn to non-elected invention.

Election/Restrictions

Applicant's election without traverse of Group I, claims 1-2 in the reply filed on 10-23-06 is acknowledged.

Priority

Acknowledgment is made of applicant's claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. 119(a)-(d). The certified copy has been filed in parent Application No.08/894,818, filed on 5-20-1998.

Drawings

Drawings submitted in this application are accepted by the Examiner for examination purposes only.

Specification

Examiner notes that applicants have not updated the relationship of the instant application to its parent application that has matured in to a US patent. Examiner urges applicants to amend said information by providing the US patent number in response to this Office action.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall contain a written description of the invention, and of the manner and process of making and using it, in such full, clear, concise, and exact terms as to enable any person skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and use the same and shall set forth the best mode contemplated by the inventor of carrying out his invention.

Claims 1 and 2 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, because the specification, while being enabling for two hyperthermostable protease enzymes comprising the amino acid sequence SEQ ID NO: 1 or 5, does not reasonably provide enablement for any functional equivalents (i.e., mutants and variants having the very same function of being a hyperthermostable protease). The specification does not enable any person skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make the invention commensurate in scope with these claims.

Factors to be considered in determining whether undue experimentation is required are summarized in *In re Wands* (858 F.2d 731, 8 USPQ 2nd 1400 (Fed. Cir. 1988)) as follows: (1) the quantity of experimentation necessary, (2) the amount of direction or guidance presented, (3) the presence or absence of working examples, (4) the nature of the invention, (5) the state of the prior art, (6) the relative skill of those in the art, (7) the predictability or unpredictability of the art, and (8) the breadth of the claim(s).

Claims 1 and 2 are so broad as to encompass any polypeptide having any amino acid sequence and having hyperthermostable protease activity including variants, mutants and recombinants of SEQ ID NO:1 or 5. The scope of the claims is not commensurate with the enablement provided by the disclosure with regard to the extremely large number of hyperthermostable proteases broadly encompassed by the claims. Since the amino acid sequence of a protein determines its structural and functional properties, predictability of which changes

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can be tolerated in a protein's amino acid sequence and obtain the desired activity requires a knowledge of and guidance with regard to which amino acids in the protein's sequence, if any, are tolerant of modification and which are conserved (i.e. expectedly intolerant to modification), and detailed knowledge of the ways in which the proteins' structure relates to its function.

However, in this case the disclosure is limited to the nucleotide and encoded amino acid sequence of only two hyperthermostable protease. It would require undue experimentation of the skilled artisan to make and use the claimed polypeptides. The specification is limited to teaching the use of SEQ ID NO: 1 and 5 as a hyperthermostable protease but provides no guidance with regard to the making of variants and mutants or with regard to other uses. In view of the great breadth of the claim, amount of experimentation required to make the claimed polypeptides, the lack of guidance, working examples, and unpredictability of the art in predicting function from a polypeptide primary structure (e.g., see Ngo et al. in *The Protein Folding Problem and Tertiary Structure Prediction*, 1994, Merz et al. (ed.), Birkhauser, Boston, MA, pp. 433 and 492-495), the claimed invention would require undue experimentation. As such, the specification fails to teach one of ordinary skill how to use the full scope of the polypeptides encompassed by this claim.

While enzyme isolation techniques, recombinant and mutagenesis techniques are known, and it is routine in the art to screen for multiple substitutions or multiple modifications as encompassed by the instant claims, the specific amino acid positions within a protein's sequence where amino acid modifications can be made with a reasonable expectation of success in obtaining the desired activity/utility are limited in any protein and the result of such modifications is unpredictable. In addition, one skilled in the art would expect any tolerance to

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modification for a given protein to diminish with each further and additional modification, e.g. multiple substitutions.

The specification does not support the broad scope of the claims which encompass all modifications and fragments of any hyperthermostable protease including variants, mutants and recombinants of SEQ ID NOS:1 and 5 because the specification does not establish: (A) regions of the protein structure which may be modified without affecting hyperthermostable protease activity; (B) the general tolerance of hyperthermostable proteases to modification and extent of such tolerance; (C) a rational and predictable scheme for modifying any amino acid residue in SEQ ID NO:1 or 5 with an expectation of obtaining the desired biological function; and (D) the specification provides insufficient guidance as to which of the essentially infinite possible choices is likely to be successful.

Thus, applicants have not provided sufficient guidance to enable one of ordinary skill in the art to make and use the claimed invention in a manner reasonably correlated with the scope of the claims broadly including hyperthermostable protease with an enormous number of amino acid modifications SEQ ID NOS: 1 and 5. The scope of the claims must bear a reasonable correlation with the scope of enablement (*In re Fisher*, 166 USPQ 19 24 (CCPA 1970)).

Without sufficient guidance, determination of hyperthermostable proteases having the desired biological characteristics is unpredictable and the experimentation left to those skilled in the art is unnecessarily, and improperly, extensive and undue. See *In re Wands* 858 F.2d 731, 8 USPQ2d 1400 (Fed. Cir, 1988).

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Claims 1-2 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as containing subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to reasonably convey to one skilled in the relevant art that the inventor(s), at the time the application was filed, had possession of the claimed invention.

Claims 1-2 are directed to isolated hyperthermostable proteases comprising SEQ ID NO:1 or 5 and their respective functional equivalents, which essentially read on mutants and variants of any hyperthermostable protease. Claims 1-2 are rejected under this section of 35 USC 112 because the claims are directed to a genus of polypeptides derived from SEQ ID NO:1 or 5 including modified polypeptide sequences, modified by at least one of deletion, addition, insertion and substitution of an amino acid residue in SEQ ID NO:1 or 5, that have not been disclosed in the specification. No description has been provided of the modified polypeptide sequences encompassed by the claim. No information, beyond the characterization of SEQ ID NO:1 or 5 has been provided by applicants, which would indicate that they had possession of the claimed genus of modified polypeptides. The specification does not contain any disclosure of the structure of all the polypeptide sequences derived from SEQ ID NO:1 or 5, including fragments and variants within the scope of the claimed genus. The genus of polypeptides claimed is a large variable genus including peptides, which can have a wide variety of structures. Therefore many structurally unrelated polypeptides are encompassed within the scope of these claims. The specification discloses only two species of the claimed genus, which is insufficient to put one of skill in the art in possession of the attributes and features of all species within the claimed genus. Therefore, one skilled in the art cannot reasonably conclude that applicant had possession of the claimed invention at the time the instant application was

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filed. Applicant is referred to the revised guidelines concerning compliance with the written description requirement of U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, published in the Official Gazette and also available at www.uspto.gov.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 1-2 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Ilse IB et al. (Appl. Environ. Microbiol., 1990, Vol. 56(7):1992-1998) or Masaaki Morikowa et al. (Appl. Environ. Microbiol., 1994, Vol. 60(12):4559-4566). This rejection is based upon the public availability of printed publications. Claims 1-2 of the instant application are drawn to isolated hyperthermostable proteases comprising SEQ ID NO:1 or 5 and their respective functional equivalents, which essentially read on mutants and variants of any hyperthermostable protease. Ilse B et al. and Morikowa et al. both disclose functional equivalents of the hyperthermostable proteases claimed in claims 1-2. Since there is no limitation placed on the number of changes that can be present in the polypeptide sequence of SEQ ID NO:1 or 5 for a functionally equivalent variant polypeptide having hyperthermostable protease activity, claims 1-2 read on the enzymes disclosed by Ilse B et al. and Morikowa et al. Thus Ilse B et al. and Morikowa et al. anticipate claims 1-2 of this application as written.

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Double Patenting

A rejection based on double patenting of the "same invention" type finds its support in the language of 35 U.S.C. 101 which states that "whoever invents or discovers any new and useful process ... may obtain a patent therefor ..." (Emphasis added). Thus, the term "same invention," in this context, means an invention drawn to identical subject matter. See *Miller v. Eagle Mfg. Co.*, 151 U.S. 186 (1894); *In re Ockert*, 245 F.2d 467, 114 USPQ 330 (CCPA 1957); and *In re Vogel*, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970).

A statutory type (35 U.S.C. 101) double patenting rejection can be overcome by canceling or amending the conflicting claims so they are no longer coextensive in scope. The filing of a terminal disclaimer cannot overcome a double patenting rejection based upon 35 U.S.C. 101.

Claims 1-2 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 as claiming the same invention as that of claim 1 of prior U.S. Patent No. US 6,261,822. This is a double patenting rejection. Claims 1-2 of this application are drawn to hyperthermostable protease comprising SEQ ID NO:1 or 5 and their functional equivalents. Claim 1 of prior US patent 6,261,822 granted to the applicant is drawn to a hyperthermostable protease comprising the amino acid sequence SEQ ID NO:3, which is actually a "functional equivalent" of either SEQ ID NO:1 or 5.

Conclusion

None of the claims are allowable.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the Examiner should be directed to Manjunath N. Rao, Ph.D. whose telephone number is 571-272-0939. The Examiner can normally be reached on 7.00 a.m. to 3.30 p.m. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the Examiner's supervisor, Ponnathapura Achutamurthy can be reached on 571-272-0928. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300 for regular communications

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and for After Final communications. Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 571-272-1600.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Manjunath", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Manjunath N. Rao, Ph.D.
Primary Examiner
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January 10, 2007